

HISTORIC AREA COMMISSION  
New Castle Town Hall  
2<sup>nd</sup> and Delaware Streets  
June 14, 2018

Present: David Baldini  
Jean Norvell  
Marty Wright  
Lynn Briggs

Also Present: Leila Hamroun, Architectural Consultant

Absent: Laura Fontana, Chairperson

Mr. Baldini convened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum was declared.

Mr. Baldini noted a correction to the May 17, 2018 Minutes: Bob Calhoun should be Bob Colburn, page 2.

**Approval of Minutes –There being no additional corrections, a Motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the 5/17/18 meeting as amended. The Motion was approved.**

Mr. Baldini advised that there was one Application before the Commission.

**NEW APPLICATIONS**

**14 The Strand – Application #01549-931**

**Repair back gable-board due to carpenter bee infestation**

Bonnie S. White presented an Application to repair the back gable-board of 14 The Strand due to carpenter bee infestation. Carpenter bees have infested the board and woodpeckers have made the situation worse. Ms. White is trying to sell the property, and her pest control contractor advised the best method to repair is to cover the gable-board with white metal. Mr. Wright advised that his understanding is that the bees bore in from the back side, and therefore, covering the gable-board with white metal would not fix the problem. Ms. White concurred, and stated that she would like to replace the gable-board with a plastic wood-like product. Ms. Norvell asked Ms. White to clarify what she intended. Ms. White asked for the Commission's recommendation; however, she would prefer to replace the gable-board with a plastic wood-like product. Mrs. Norvell noted that her understanding was that the bees had to be eradicated with chemicals inside, and then the wood could be capped. Ms. White explained the bees come back every year.

Ms. Hamroun advised that carpenter bees do happen with wood structures, and Ms. White should be able to treat and repel them. However, because the house is in the Historic District, removing the gable-board and replacing it with a plastic wood-like product is not

appropriate on a building of this type. Ms. White questioned why the back of the house and the least accessible part of the woodwork which no one can see from the public right-of-way cannot be replaced with plastic. Ms. Hamroun noted that although the location of the board does allow for some flexibility, it does not mean that any kind of alternate material can be utilized. She added that if all other trim is wood, that one barge should not be replaced with an alternate material. Ms. White stated that she is trying to sell the house and the holes in the gable-board are detrimental to a potential sale of the property. Mr. Wright advised the property is a “contributing building” and the Guidelines are very specific. Ms. White asked if the Commission was denying her request to encase the gable-board in metal. Mr. Baldini advised that metal is not recognized as an acceptable alternate material. Ms. Hamroun added that aluminum casing is specifically not appropriate. Ms. White suggested that the Commissioners did not understand the issues she faces with an historic house. Ms. Hamroun responded that her area of expertise is working on historic homes and she understands and empathizes with the issues Ms. White is facing; however, the Guidelines were established to preserve the historic integrity of the homes within the New Castle Historic District. Ms. White reiterated her request to have the gable-board replaced with a plastic wood-like product. Ms. Norvell asked if there is an alternate product that Ms. White could use. Ms. Hamroun advised that the only acceptable product is a proper type of species of wood. Mrs. White again reiterated that she needed the Commission’s approval to have the gable-board replaced by a plastic wood-like material. Ms. Norvell asked if Ms. White would consider pulling the damaged board down and replacing it with wood that could be treated to repel carpenter bees, which would remove any impediment to a sale of the house. Ms. White reiterated that the over-arching problem is that carpenter bees will return to the same place year after year.

Mr. Baldini asked for a Motion on the Application. **Mr. Wright made a Motion that the Commission disapprove the Application to use PVC or aluminum cladding.**

Ms. White asked for a list of residents who have received permission to use alternate materials for repairs where it is not visible from the right-of-way. Mr. Baldini advised the Guidelines were established in 2016, so any list of repairs to existing homes would in all likelihood have been done prior to that date. Since 2016, the Commission has tried to closely adhere to the Guidelines.

Ms. White explained that the property was put up for sale in 2008; however, at that time the economy froze and they were unable to sell it. Mr. Baldini explained that neither carpenter bees nor the economy are within the scope of the Historic Area Commission. Mr. Wright added that the Guidelines were adopted by a large group of citizens after lengthy review and discussion over several months.

Ms. White expressed her disappointment in the decision of the Commission. Mr. Wright advised that the Guidelines are available to be viewed by the public. Ms. White asked if anyone on the Commission could give a recommendation for a contractor. Mr. Wright noted that any contractor they might recommend would have to remove the damaged wood gable-board and replace it with another wood gable-board and Ms. White again reiterated that the bees will return.

**The Motion on the floor was seconded. On vote, the Motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. White suggested that the Guidelines should be amended to allow the use of a non-wood alternate material to repair damage where a recurring infestation has caused damage.

Mr. Baldini asked if there was any other business to discuss. Ms. Hamroun noted that she will be distributing graphics for the Guidelines that can be discussed after the public meeting.

Mr. Baldini clarified that the Application was rejected because the use of aluminum and/or plastic is not appropriate.

A discussion of carpenter bees and treatments was held.

**A Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The Motion was approved.**

**Adjournment** -- There being no further business to address, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Kathy Weirich  
Stenographer